

Envision Carlsbad Citizens Committee

Minutes

November 10, 2010

1635 Faraday Avenue, Carlsbad
Room 173B

Committee Present

Primary Members

Eric Larson (Chair)	Hap L'Heureux	Gina Mc Bride
Jim Farley (Vice-Chair)	Mike Howes	Robert Gates
Fred Sandquist	Julie Baker	Barbara Hamilton
Allen Sweet	Kirk Cowles	Jeff Segall
Jim Comstock	Diane Proulx	

Alternate Members

Jack Cumming	Tina Schmidt	Farrah Douglas
Jim Bradley	Guy Roney	

Absent: John O'Reilly (Primary), Greg Nelson (Primary), Jeannie Sprague-Bentley (Primary), Sean Bentley (Primary), Glen Etherington (Alternate), Dr. Anne Spacie (Alternate), Chris Korogi (Alternate), Sean Sexton (Alternate), Robert Nielsen (Alternate)

City of Carlsbad Staff

Chuck McBride – Finance Director
Gary Barberio – Community & Economic Development Director
Don Neu – Planning Director
David de Cordova – Principal Planner
Chris DeCerbo – Principal Planner
Jennifer Jesser – Senior Planner
Rachel McGuire – Community Coordinator
Barbara Nedros – Administrative Assistant

Consultant

Rajeev Bhatia – Dyett & Bhatia
Ken Lee – RSG
Frank Spevacek - RSG
Sandra Holder

Public/other attendees

Chair Eric Larson called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

1. Minutes from October 27, 2010 EC3 Meeting

The minutes from the October 27, 2010 meeting were accepted as presented by a unanimous vote of the Committee. Hap L'Heureux and Jim Farley abstained.

2. Review Working Paper #2: The Local Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism

Rajeev Bhatia indicated that RSG prepared the Working Paper #2 and reviewed by Dyett & Bhatia. Mr. Bhatia told the committee that these papers are designed to stimulate discussion and dialogue. The working papers are not policy and will not be incorporated into the General Plan.

Jim Farley asked if the working paper would be revised after discussion or is it the final product. Mr. Bhatia told the Committee that this was the final working paper, because it is a working paper and not a final policy document.

Rajeev Bhatia gave an overview and presentation about the working paper. Rajeev Bhatia introduced Frank Spevacek of RSG.

Frank Spevacek gave the Committee an overview of the RSG Company and what the company looks at in preparing the information. Frank Spevacek turned the presentation over to Ken Lee to briefly go over the information that is contained in the Working Paper #2.

Ken Lee summarized the overall approach and talked about the highlights of the current forecasted trends. Mr. Lee talked about how trends will be changing in the future and how the job clusters, tourism and retail will change also.

Sandra Holder explained the format of the discussion process that the committee would be following, and Ms. Holder indicated that discussion notes will be taken and given to the consultants so that they have the information and topics that the committee identifies.

The Committee started the discussion on the questions presented. This exercise took approximately 75 minutes. Notes of the Committee's discussion are attached to these minutes.

3. Break – Committee decided not to take a break

Sandra Holder informed the Committee that the next meeting will be held on December 8, 2010 and that they would be reviewing Working Paper #3 on Open Space and the Natural Environment; Access to Recreation and Active, Healthy Lifestyles.

4. EC3 Feedback

Sandra Holder asked the Committee if the format that was used for this meeting was better for them than at the last meeting. The Committee agreed that the format used at this meeting was better than what they did at the last meeting.

Rajeev Bhatia asked the Committee how the Working Papers were working for the Committee. Committee members indicated that the Working Papers were very informative and a great educational tool.

5. Public Comment

Audience members indicated that the format used at this meeting was better to observe than the World Café format that was used at the meeting of October 27, 2010.

A member of the audience commented that Vestas, the world's largest wind turbine manufacturer, is looking for a place to locate in the United States.

It was suggested that a 10-acre parcel by Plaza Camino Real in Oceanside could be annexed to city and used for housing.

City could attract winter tourists from the Midwest.

Eric Larson adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Attachment – Committee Discussion Notes of Working Paper #2 - The Local Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism

ENVISION CARLSBAD CITIZENS' COMMITTEE
Working Paper #2 – The Local Economy, Business Diversity, and Tourism
Discussion Notes
November 10, 2010

Conversation One: Economic Strategy

Question 1: How should the city program the decreasing supply of vacant, developable land and spur redevelopment of existing underutilized land to:

- (a) Facilitate future growth of existing job clusters;*
- (b) Promote tax-generating uses within those clusters; and*
- (c) Support the creation of new job clusters in emerging industries (e.g., green/clean technology)?*

Question 2: What General Plan goals, objectives, and policies could the city adopt to provide incentives that attract businesses that expand key job clusters and establish new and emerging clusters?

Question 3: How can the city plan for and leverage its own real property assets to achieve the Carlsbad Community Vision?

Preliminary Q&A

Carlsbad's lease rates for manufacturing, R&D land are comparable to Sorrento Valley, La Jolla Mesa, UTC bio-tech areas. What strategies can we adopt from these areas to retain such clusters? It was noted that proximity to UCSD campus was a big factor

Lease cost for manufacturing high relative to supporting low wage workers. Lack of housing for lower wage workers

Manufacturing labor costs also a major factor, ie, manufacturing jobs being outsourced to other countries; therefore, a housing strategy for manufacturing workforce may not be reasonable

Another committee member countered that the city has a large tourism-oriented sector that employs many lower wage workers; so it's not just manufacturing jobs the City needs to consider housing for.

The working paper analyzed supply of vacant employment land. It was pointed out that the issue of what to do about existing vacant buildings is another discussion.

Committee Comments

How can land use policy be made flexible to adapt to changing market conditions?

Sections of the economy are changing, when the market changes we are not stuck with bad product

Assess vacancies, the types of job clusters that we want and build a strategy- identify, recruit, retain

1st strategy should be to reduce existing vacancies

Offer incentives, fast track permitting to get companies in

Need to be more flexible and make it easier for companies to come into the city

Be more aggressive to seek companies to come into the city

Clean tech and Green tech are going to look different in the future

Look at wider variety of general plan land use designations. For example, city has a one-size-fits-all Planned Industrial designation

Working paper illustrates economic power of Carlsbad now and into the future – very affluent and upscale community

Want better restaurants, more upscale shopping, best school district

Make Carlsbad the choice for the CEO's to live in to attract companies – more flexible

Tailor land use policies to attract businesses here perhaps through form-based codes, allowing retail in business parks, flexible zoning laws

Need to figure out why we have vacancies; concerned about erosion of manufacturing base we have

Need to find out what incentives we need to put in place

Key is to keep land values high and find the right tenants willing to pay that kind of money

Look at other uses than industrial; job cluster opportunities in locations such as El Camino Real/Alga Rd, the library, more retail etc.

Potential opportunity for re-use of industrial areas, low-cost housing

Finding companies that we want in Carlsbad and provide concessions to bring them here: lower fees, shorter permitting, variety of housing

Office vacancy rate is too high

Do an exit interview with companies that may leave the City

Thinkers and researchers, professionals, and technical types like to live in Carlsbad for a number of reasons: the airport, open space, wonderful beach community, village. All of these help overcome the high cost of locating here

An integrated lifestyle is emerging

Provide opportunities for start-ups, small business, incubator

There is a need for a close partnership between the City and the Chamber of Commerce

Bio-tech increases need for water and energy

Energy sources need to be balanced with making it easier for companies to get in

Energy efficiency is key; develop alternative energy resources

City needs to lead the way in alternative energy

We need a strategy – linkage with land uses

Flexibility and strategize to bring in the companies we want to see in the city

Long term vision – develop a strategy and particular codes acknowledging that redevelopment of sites are peculiar situations

Industrial areas around the airport – won't need as much in the future. Need to strategize how to recycle land uses

Who will bring in businesses? Concerned that City is not being aggressive or innovative enough

Housing, school quality, cultural amenities, access to airport are important to attracting jobs. We need lab techs as well as scientists (ie, support personnel, support industries)

Vacant buildings are obsolete and need to be re-worked

Protect the open space

Marketing is the key area – Carlsbad has some scarce assets such as beaches, airport, schools, and golf courses

City has been lucky so far, and can't continue to rely on companies "just showing up"

As General Plan is implemented, there should be a monitoring program for changing trends (feedback) and adjust as necessary, rather than wait too long between plan updates

Conversation Two: Housing

Question 4: As the city nears build-out under the Growth Management Plan, and the age of existing housing stock in older neighborhoods reaches the end of its life cycle:

- *What types and densities of residential uses should replace existing stock; and*
- *What are the opportunities to provide workforce housing for the growing hospitality job cluster and tourism industry through infill development and multifamily rehabilitation?*

Committee Comments

Redevelopment areas – mall, village – can be developed as fairly dense mixed use areas

Make community more walkable – preserve open space by clustering development

Population is aging, but there is also a younger workforce emerging that wants denser, multi-family housing

Multi-family housing needs to be more attractive to younger professionals

Higher density is allowed now, but with many small lots owned by different owners, it's difficult to accumulate large parcels of land to develop a high density project

Corridor between Plaza Camino Real and village could be developed and be a mixed use community

Issue is not just density, but where it is located, i.e., in an area that provides public spaces and services, not in the middle of nowhere like La Costa Glen

Larger properties have been subdivided. Biggest challenge we are going to face is infill. The easy stuff is gone

It's the lack of density that makes Carlsbad attractive, but agree that Downtown could use more density

Density is not an either/or proposition. There are opportunities to increase density and height in some areas of the city – Plaza Camino Real, major transportation corridors are examples

There is no entry level housing market in Carlsbad – need to create it with denser housing

Where do older adults who have raised their families go? There is no product in Carlsbad for them. Increased density increases economic diversity of people, which is good for the community.

Walk to services – build housing closer to services

Need more density in certain areas – provide upscale multi-family units – need more flexible surface public transportation system

Development rules should encourage a sustainable multi-generational community

Need to hold onto unused units (excess dwelling unit bank) like they are gold – use them as a tool to get the needed type of housing. Don't write off excess dwelling units

Should not have conflicting zoning rules – beach overlay zone conflicts. Example: a project might meet density, but can't provide required parking

Housing used for short term rentals go to monthly rentals to serve residents vs. tourists

Conversation Three: Retail

Question 5: What opportunities exist in the near-term for the city to capture forecasted demand for retail space within the city's current leakage categories?

Question 6: What innovative land use designations and policies would promote reconfiguration of existing regional retail assets to adapt to emerging consumer trends and shopping preferences?

Preliminary Q&A:

Israel is on a path to be "all-electric" within ten years.

New electric vehicles (such as Nissan Leaf) are coming to market. Charging stations are becoming quicker. Manufacturers will be looking to localities to assist in building necessary electric infrastructure

Lessons of Plaza Camino Real and Car Country are that more malls across the nation are redeveloping as mixed-use

A committee member observed that many local retired and active duty military will go to Camp Pendelton for their shopping needs because it's cheaper

Concept of small (mom and pop) businesses is a romantic image that doesn't work. Small shops struggle

Committee Comments

Change parking requirement in the village – if we did, there would be more restaurants there “tomorrow”

Build/attract other interesting stores then people will walk

There will be leakage in commercial categories we may not want - Furniture Row in San Marcos for example; but do we need to duplicate?

Gas stations and grocery stores are not well-located - need to be mapped out

Mall has huge potential - it is a large open space

Mall could be a more walkable space and mixed use area

What we don't want is “classic” fast food eateries. Have more healthy places to eat

Increase number of specialty markets. Have a Fresh & Easy in the village area; promote local foods, energy-efficient stores

Mall is more pedestrian friendly than the village area. Cars in village make walking hazardous

Would like to see pedestrian only segments; could be a visitor draw similar to European cities, Boulder, CO

Would like to see a permanent farmer's market that is open at 7:00 a.m. to noon everyday

Density of sales necessary to support lease rates in Carlsbad cause for leakage in some categories. For example, furniture stores in San Marcos

There is a lack of fast food restaurants because the City does not allow drive-throughs

Downtown retail environment is unappealing. Don't need "junk or antiques"; not sure retail leakages are important to older generation

Community needs more grocery stores

City may not need lots of auto parts stores, etc.

Need to look at Car Country – dealers may be locked in in terms of land; but [City] may consider finding more land to attract more dealers

There are no anchor uses in the village; need two anchor tenants to create foot traffic; reduce parking restrictions, increase building height

There is not enough density in the village

Retailers concerned with sales/sq. ft. space. May not be able to build our way to increased internal demand, but can attract more regional traffic

Concerned about cannibalizing own businesses

Because Carlsbad has the beach on one side, there is a need to overcome this circumferential disadvantage

Need to find ways to attract anchors downtown

Other suggestions: create a pedestrian mall, skate museum to attract more people to the downtown

Conversation Four: Tourism

Question 7: How can the city continue to build upon its defining attributes and work with key stakeholders (e.g., resorts, golf courses/manufacturers) to increase year-round tourism?

Comments

Make Carlsbad a destination for sightseeing from San Diego – cruise ships – eco tourism; the three lagoon foundations and Buena Vista Audubon Society have been discussing ideas to promote lagoons to tourists

What can we do to make this the go to place for intellectual symposia?

Need a medium size convention center; specialty educational facilities

Support year-round agricultural tourism (i.e., The Flower Fields, strawberry fields); place is packed when the flowers are in bloom

Large numbers of cyclists along the coast on any given weekend; promote organize events (similar to Oceanside Bike-the-Coast, or final stage of Tour of California in Escondido)

In the lagoons have stand up paddle boarding races, places to launch, facilities, retail

Museum of Making Music and GIA are potential intellectual kinds of places to visit – people tend to forget they're here

Have a co-marketing plan – Carlsbad in summer and Phoenix in winter

Needs to be a stronger Carlsbad identity with major attractions, destinations. Examples: Legoland *California*, Park Hyatt *Aviara* Resort, *La Costa* Resort and Spa – not *Carlsbad*

Make videos about the City to promote its attributes; hold high tech conferences

For conference attendees, there is not enough else to do while here

The city has some leakage in entertainment; need more entertainment venues

Schedule other special events adjacent to the Village Fair so that people come for the week and not just the day

Theater, dance productions need to be bigger to draw more interest, similar to Moonlight Theater at Bregle Terrace Park

Need some type of amphitheatre or other outdoor venue

More farmers' market environments – flower mart, similar to San Luis Obispo, which is a real tourist draw

Carlsbad should be home to more world class athletic events

There are assets in Carlsbad that we don't think about that could be tourist destinations: desalination plant, Hubbs Sea World Research Institute Aquaculture facility, Floral Trade Center

Need botanical areas to visit

Local nonprofits can team up with conference organizers to promote tourism. Example: Batiquitos Lagoon Foundation recently worked with American Planning Association

annual conference to encourage youth to participate in a post-conference lagoon clean-up, restoration event.

Our city is very unfriendly to motorhomes – no place for them to park; there is huge visitor potential

Use the airport for special rates to bring in tourists

Beach tourism could be improved by addressing lack of facilities (i.e., restrooms) and amenities, and maintenance of beach and existing facilities; recognize that the state of California maintains the beaches but maybe the City needs to supplement maintenance for more frequent cleaning